

Part VI. LIMIT OF COMBAT POWER

Chapter I. Calculation of the Turning Point in a Battle

Section 1. Summary

1. Meaning of the turning point in a battle

a. The turning point in a battle is the point where a situation occurs that causes a change in the respective posture and combat power of each of the two sides so that there is a reversal in the ratio of relative combat power, or the point at which the conduct of tactical operations changes to an advantageous situation.

In this case, the point where the situation reverses the ratio of relative combat power is called "the turnabout point in combat power."

b. Since the turning point in a battle generally has the result of reversing the positions of attack and defense, judging the timeliness and appropriateness of a turning point in a battle and a plan to cope with it are extremely important, and when there is an error in this, a severe defeat results.

(2)[sic] Reduction in combat power from attrition

The combat power of the attacker decreases faster than that of the defender and becomes equal to, or lower than, that of the defender.

(a) There is great probability of a gradual decrease in offensive power in cases where there initially is no great difference in the ratio of combat power of the two parties.

(b) Attrition of the combat power of the attacker is greater than that of the defender.

(c) The decrease in combat power of the attacker includes unit fatigue, disadvantage of posture, and the influence of terrain, weather, etc.

c. Dispersion and expansion of the battle line

The attacker, in order to contain the defender, necessarily disperses and extends his battle line, and the attack power on individual unit fronts is caused to decrease below the combat power of the defender.

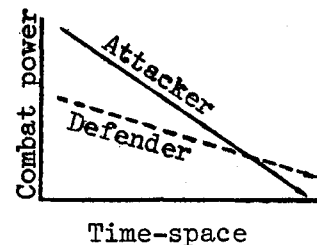


Fig. 84

Section 2. Counteroffensive

1. Meaning of counteroffensive

Counteroffensive means a unit that is in a defensive position shifting to the offensive in order to advance and deliver a decisive blow to the enemy, the

action of the unit that shifts to the offensive being an all-out attack with the objective of overwhelming and annihilating the enemy.

Combat, by its nature, can reach its objective only by the offensive (attack). Hence, the defender, on seeing an opportunity, shifts to the offensive (attack), there is constant effort to seize tactical opportunities to destroy the enemy, and this course can be seen in many historical examples.

Historical examples:

Counteroffensive of the Japanese Army in the Battle of Sha-he [Sha-ho] in the Russo-Japanese War

Counteroffensive of the combined forces of Oda and Tokugawa in the Battle of Nagashino [1575]

2. Conditions for a counteroffensive

For a counteroffensive, it is necessary to rely on a turnabout in relative combat power and on superior posture.

a. Turnabout in relative combat power

See this chapter, Section 1.

b. Superior posture

(1) The enemy is decoyed into an unfavorable posture. (Decoy attack)

The enemy being drawn into our snare (for example, within a reentrant in our position) and being caused to assume a disadvantageous posture, seems to be a definitely correct course of action, but whether or not the enemy accepts it depends on the enemy's will.

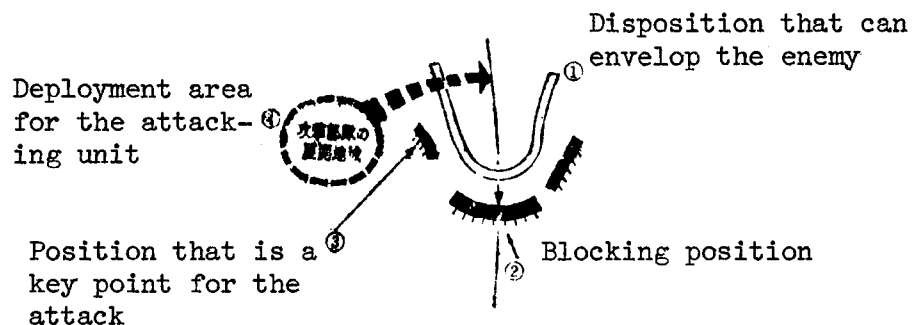


Fig. 85. Example of a desirable posture

Hence, in decoying the enemy, reliance must be placed, inter alia, on the following:

(a) The enemy is caused to take the course of action that is most desirable in his situation

(b) A lure (bait) is provided.

(c) Forcing in accordance with the over-all posture.

Decoying with dummy troop dispositions, unnatural small works, etc., is an unreasonable requirement, and when this is a prerequisite in plans for a counteroffensive, failure may occur.

(2) Taking advantage of enemy mistakes

Mistakes are an accompaniment of combat, and there are many cases of inviting a disadvantageous posture through mistakes. However, this is a chance occurrence, and it is not reasonable to expect this from the beginning, but the commander must have the insight to discover this tactical opportunity quickly and take advantage of it.

Historical example: Battle of the French Second Army on the banks of the Meurthe River in World War I [20-22 August 1914].

Note: In regard to the "retrograde offensive": This is the action of a withdrawing unit in turning the momentum of the pursuing unit against that force and shifting to the counterattack, and it succeeds only through a major mistake by the pursuing unit.

Historical example: Battle of the German Sixth Army in Lorraine in World War I.

3. Time of shift to the offensive

a. Possibility of a shift to the offensive

The possibility of a shift to the offensive varies from moment to moment because of the enemy's changes in posture (shifting to the defensive, adjustments in posture, etc.). Moreover, if the shift to the offensive is not accomplished at the time the possibility is most opportune, there are many cases where, not only is the desired result not realizable, but it ends in failure and the tactical situation becomes disadvantageous. Hence, it is extremely important and also difficult to seize a favorable tactical opportunity in shifting to the offensive.

Historical examples:

(1) Examples of missing a tactical opportunity and failing

Battle of the French Second Army near "Ryūrumu" on the banks of the Meurthe River [August 1914]

Battle of the French Third Army and the Army of Lorraine on the banks of the Haute Aisne [20-22 August 1914]

(2) Examples of properly seizing an opportunity and achieving success

Offensive of the German Eighth Army (François's Corps) in the Battle of Gumbinnen

Joffre's offensive in the Battle of the Marne [1914]

The offensive of the Japanese Army at the Sha-he [Sha-ho (Manchuria)] [battle, 1904]

b. Ideal time to shift to the offensive

- (1) Containing enemy momentum at a key front, with us having the advantage in posture
- (2) The combat power of the enemy being greatly reduced, at the time of turnabout [in the balance] of combat power of the attacker and defender
- (3) Time when offensive combat power is sufficient and preparations for an offensive have been completed

c. Time of implementing a shift to the offensive

(1) In cases where concentration of forces or arrival of reinforcing units is made the occasion for shifting to the offensive, discovering the opportunity is easy, but in cases of taking advantage of a setback in an enemy attack or of an enemy mistake, the commander must have an excellent eye for opportunities.

(2) A moderate amount of time is required from the decision to the execution of a shift to the offensive. (If the unit is large, [the time] is really long.) Hence, during this period, changes in the tactical situation, such as how the tactical opportunity may change and whether the key front may not collapse, are appropriately discerned, and the time is determined for carrying out the change to the offensive.

(3) In preparation for the action of a change to the offensive, the minimum required condition is completion of deployment of artillery forces.

For example, it is the time when artillery that is deployed in depth has completed deployment laterally. Also, this is an indication for judging the time of an opponent's action changing to the offensive.

Also, in regard to a shift to the offensive, it must not be forgotten that close air support also is an important condition.

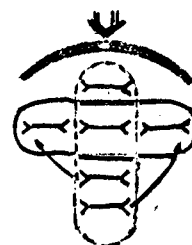


Fig. 86

4. Direction of a shift to the offensive

Determination of the direction of an attack, along with selection of the proper moment for making an attack, exerts an important influence on the success of a shift to the offensive. It is desirable to select the following in the light of an estimate of changes in the tactical situation between the decision and implementation.

- a. Ability to envelop simultaneously units both on the flank and in the rear of the enemy.
- b. Optimum direction relative to a subsequent attack by units of the key front.

Historical examples:

Battle of Gumbinnen (A) (suitable)

Battle of the Arges River [Romania, August 1916-February 1917] (B) (unsuitable)

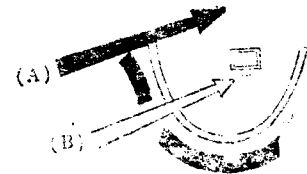


Fig. 87

5. Relationship between the key front and the decisive engagement

Example of the relationship between the key-front position and the main-decision battlefield in cases of an attack toward an unsupported flank of the enemy force

- a. Case in which the main-decision battlefield is abreast of the key front or behind its flank

In this case, there is little strategic gain along the enemy's line of communications, and decisive results cannot be obtained, but implementation is easy.

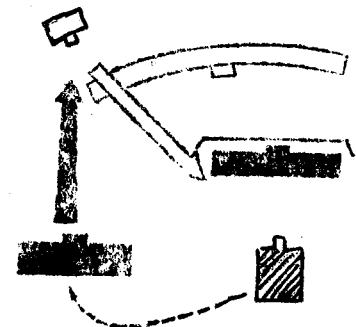


Fig. 88

- b. Case in which the main decisive battle is sought in front of a flank of the key front

In this case, if successful, there is great possibility of containing the enemy unit, and a great victory can be gained, but there are the following problems concerning implementation:

(1) Since deployment is within the enemy's power sphere, reaching the attack position is dangerous.

(2) The flanks and rear of the attacking unit are exposed and particularly subject to enemy attack.

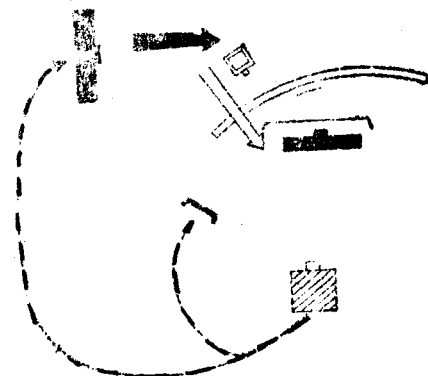


Fig. 89

Historical example:

Offensive of the French Third Army on the river banks of the Haute Aisne [20-22 August 1914]

From the above two examples:

Case a. is easy and safe to carry out, but has small results.

Case b. is extremely dangerous but, if successful, has large results.
(Relationship between risk and results)

The question of which to adopt depends solely upon the situation but, in particular, is governed by the self-confidence of the commander.

6. The shift to the offensive effected toward an enemy flank from a salient in the battle line

This is using the undulations of the battle line; interdicting, from a salient in it, the withdrawal route of the enemy element that has advanced into a reentrant; and attempting to destroy that force.

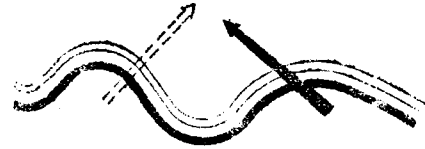


Fig. 90

This method being a breakthrough, its conditions are primarily careful preparation and concentration of superior decisive combat power. However, in actuality, even if the undulations are produced in the battle line and a reentrant is formed, since the enemy holds the initiative and undulations in the battle line are ever-changing, there are many cases of losing the moment of tactical opportunity. Hence, in history, there are many examples of shifting to the offensive in current posture without completing preparations, and failing.

Historical examples:

Battle of the French Third Army on the river banks of the Haute Aisne
[20-22 August 1914]

Battle of the Austrian Fourth Army in the vicinity of "Rimanowa [Limanowa?]"-
"Rabanowa" [Battle of Komarow (1914)?]

7. Offensive defense (decisive defense)

Offensive defense means defense which, from the first, plans an offensive, seeking to shift to the offensive when an opportunity is found, in order to attempt a decisive battle.

For example, in cases where we have an offensive mission and it would be disadvantageous to assume the offensive immediately because of the relationship between the combat power of the two sides or because of posture, we temporarily assume the defensive, impose casualties on the enemy, and after making the ratio of relative combat power of the two sides favorable to us or creating a posture advantageous to us, attempt to shift to the offensive.

In this case, defensive dispositions and the conduct of defensive combat must be structured with the primary purpose of the offensive. Since this defense is combat that involves a special requirement on the enemy, and since the enemy has free will, it is necessary always to give strict attention to impose our

desired course.

Historical examples:

Napoleon's Battle of Austerlitz [1805]

Masayuki Sanada's Battle of Ueda [1600?]

Section 3. Offensive's termination point

1. Meaning of the offensive's termination point

The offensive's termination point is the point where the attacker reaches the limit of offensive capability, which depends on the extending of the battle line, lengthening of the supply line, materiel shortages, etc.

2. Estimate of the offensive's termination point

When past military history and historical examples are examined, there are very many examples of mistakes in estimating the offensive's termination point and suffering major defeats; hence, one can know how important this estimate is.

a. Relationship to the combat-situation (combat-capability) turnabout point

The offensive's termination point generally is sought before the combat-capability turnabout point. Hence, in regard to relative combat power, in situations where superiority can be maintained, it is necessary to conduct subsequent operations.

In other words, it can be said to be a situation where it is advantageous to have a turnabout in the conduct of military operations, a turning point in the battle.

b. One example of the offensive's termination point in the tactical sphere

Example: $A > B$, $A < C$

A is attacking B, and B is gradually withdrawing.

C is advancing, and its time of arrival is the time at which A can completely defeat B.

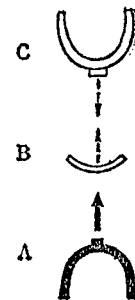


Fig. 91

Consideration of this case while disregarding other factors:

Case of "1" [in Fig. 92]

[Force] A can defeat B, but at that point in time, C arrives on the battlefield. The combat power of A is reduced by attrition, posture also collapses, and conflict with C is extremely disadvantageous.

Case of "2" [in Fig. 92]

[Force] A cannot completely defeat B, a considerable part remaining, but A obtains a margin to cope with C.

Case of "3" [in Fig. 92]

[Force] A obtains sufficient margin of time to cope with C, but, in this case, A must cope with C and the remaining part of B (a still respectable combat power).

In this case, it may be concluded that "2" would be suitable as the offensive's termination point for A.

In actual cases, the estimate must be made on the basis of the time when C advances and of the terrain in the vicinity of the battlefield, the limit of our combat power, the degree of effect of the defeat and withdrawal of B on C, etc.

Historical example:

Battle of Napoleon in the vicinity of Lake Garda [1796?]. (It is an example in which, during the pursuit, the limit of the offensive was seized while remaining on the defensive, and the Austrian Army was defeated in detail.)

3. Luring into entrapment toward the offensive's termination point

For the defender to lure the attacker into entrapment past the offensive's termination point toward the combat-power turnabout point, there are the following essentials:

- a. The terrain is utilized to extend the enemy's combat power in depth or laterally.
- b. The enemy's posture is split, and his supply, etc., are blocked or interdicted.
- c. Exhaustion of the enemy's base of operations is sought.

Historical examples:

Competition in extending the flank in the Battle of the Marne in World War I.

Counteroffensive of the U.S. forces against the Japanese in World War II

[German] counterattack at Avranches [France, 6-10 August 1944], counteroffensive of Soviet forces against Germany, etc.

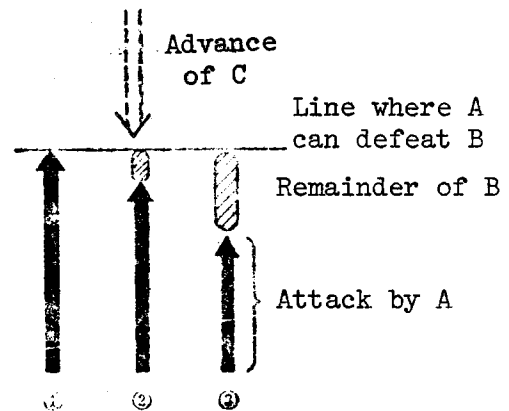


Fig. 92

Section 4. Vying in extending a flank and in enveloping

1. Meaning of vying in extending a flank and in enveloping

a. Vying in extending a flank and in enveloping means a maneuver in which, during combat, both forces each seek a decisive victory by extending the respective facing flank and effecting an envelopment.

Vying in extending a flank and in enveloping occurs on open flanks or in gaps in the battle line; and when it occurs at gaps, joint action with adjacent units is evoked.

b. Vying in extending a flank and in enveloping causes successive piecemeal application of combat power, expansion of the battle line, unit fatigue, etc., and when there is lapse into these, obtaining a decisive victory becomes increasingly difficult.

Historical examples:

Vying between German and French forces in extending open flanks in the Battle of Flanders in World War I

Extending gap flanks by the Austrian and Russian forces in the battle of "Rimanofu [Limanowa?]"-"Rabanofu" [Battle of Komarow?] in World War I

In all of these, if the stage of decisive victory is not gained, it is not a desirable situation.

2. Estimate of the turning point in the battle, in vying in extending a flank and in enveloping

a. Against our envelopment, the enemy carries out a counterenvelopment, and in cases of expected occurrence of this type of vying in extending a flank, it is necessary to discern properly the turning point in the battle and to make a proper judgment of the time and place that a decisive victory should be sought.

b. Items which must be considered in order to estimate the turning point in the battle are unit casualties, degree of fatigue, supply situation, tactical mobility, collection of intelligence information, degree of air superiority, etc.

c. Plan to seek a decisive victory in cases where a counterenvelopment is undertaken in response to an envelopment.

Below, when the enemy carries out a counterenvelopment against our envelopment, the vying is avoided and we consider how we can achieve a decisive victory.

- (1) Attack against the enemy's axis of envelopment [Fig. 94]

The battle line that is being enveloped by the enemy is curved or moved back, the enemy is temporarily

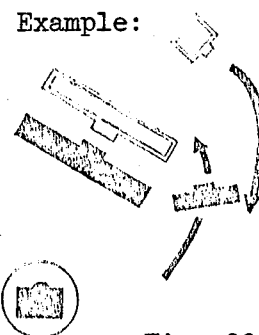


Fig. 93

blocked, decisive combat power is concentrated, and the enemy's axis of envelopment or flank is attacked.

In this case, it is necessary to cause the enemy to extend his flank on an exterior line and we on an interior line and, by this means, to maintain the balance.

Also, at this time, it is necessary to accept a disadvantageous tactical situation for a certain time.

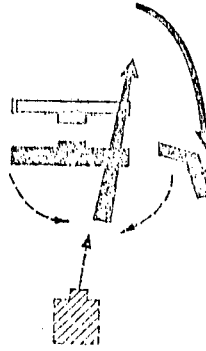


Fig. 94

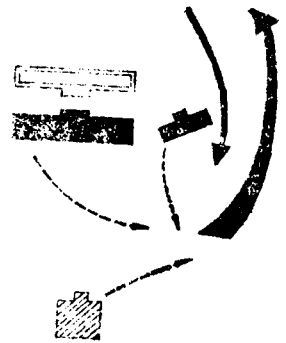


Fig. 95

(2) Counterenvelopment [Fig. 95]

Concentrating our decisive combat power, we carry out the counterenvelopment. At that time, it is necessary that there be a great and powerful action seeking to envelop also the enemy's entire reserve, so as to frustrate enemy plans for subsequent envelopment.

Whether to adopt the measure to attack the enemy's axis of envelopment or to carry out a counterenvelopment must depend on discerning the turning point in the battle and properly judging the time and place to seek a decisive victory.

Chapter II. Pursuit and Retrograde Movement

Section 1. Pursuit

1. Meaning of pursuit

Pursuit is one form of attack carried out in order to destroy enemy forces that are disengaging (withdrawing) from the battlefield, and its basic character is an engagement and not a maneuver.

2. Necessity of pursuit

a. In a situation where pursuit is necessary, if we consider the actions which the enemy can take in case we do not carry out a pursuit, they are as follows:

- (1) The enemy withdraws safely. Hence, we cannot make up for losses received at the time of an attack.
- (2) The enemy corrects his posture and restores discipline. In other words, the enemy is able to reestablish a posture of being able to oppose us.
- (3) The enemy stops at the place he desires and carries out preparation for subsequent resistance undisturbed.

- (4) Combat power is increased through recovery from fatigue and getting closer to his base of operations.

b. Disadvantages to us from not carrying out a pursuit, in addition to the above, are as follows:

- (1) Advantages considered achievable by pursuit are missed.
- (2) In order to make another attack, new sacrifices must be made.

c. Situation of losses by both sides

- (1) Attack on a position

Our losses are large, and the losses of the defending enemy are small.

- (2) Pursuit

Our losses are small, and the losses of the withdrawing enemy are large.

From the above, the victor must lose no opportunity, disregard all difficulties, and carry out a pursuit.

In the Russo-Japanese War, because the Japanese Army did not pursue after the Battle of Liao-yang, the Russian Army made a stand in the vicinity of Mukden and, moreover, turned back, shifted to the offensive, and there occurred the subsequent Battle of Sha-he [Sha-ho]; and this bluntly states the necessity of pursuit.

Also, one should remember the wise words of Moltke expressing the necessity of the pursuit, saying, "For purposes of pursuit, as long as the men and horses of the pursuing force have the spirit to pursue and the enemy does not surrender to this pressure, pursuit must not be stopped, regardless of whether the enemy may have sufficient spirit to continue advancing, and there is no reason for us not to have it."

2. Difficulty of carrying out a pursuit

a. There are extremely few historical examples of successful pursuits in the past. This fact speaks bluntly of the difficulty of carrying out a pursuit.

b. The following are considered to be causes of the difficulty in carrying out a pursuit:

- (1) Feeling of satisfaction in victory produced by the enemy's withdrawal
- (2) Fatigue of body and mind
- (3) Error in judgment by the front-line commander concerning pursuit, because of uncertainty about the general situation

- (4) Being restricted by losses and by correction of posture
- (5) Nighttime
- (6) Weather influences, terrain obstacles, shortage of organic equipment
- (7) Enemy counteractions and uncertainty of the enemy situation
- (8) Supply and rear-area situation

3. Conditions for instituting a pursuit

- a. Our posture being advantageous at the time of change to the pursuit.
- b. Clearly stating plans relative to the pursuit, preparing early pursuit, and the initial action of the pursuit being advantageous relative to the general situation.
- c. Quickly perceiving the initial action of the enemy's withdrawal and immediately taking advantage of it.
- d. Pressing and containing the withdrawing enemy on his front.
(Contact with the enemy must not be lost.)

4. Conduct of the pursuit

Items which must receive maximum attention in order to intercept and destroy the enemy by pursuit are as follows:

Where to have the pursuit objective?

How to have the positioning (direction) for pursuit?

a. Pursuit objective

It is necessary to select [an objective] on the terrain line where the enemy can be intercepted. Its remoteness varies with the enemy's withdrawal situation. If the enemy can be intercepted nearby, that is most ideal, but where reliable interception nearby is not possible, a maximum effort must be made to select a distant objective.

b. Positioning (direction) for pursuit

It is difficult to intercept and destroy the enemy by merely following the enemy withdrawing from his front and carrying out a pursuit, and it is necessary to push in from the enemy's flank and carry out a pursuit toward the enemy's rear.

In other words, it is necessary to be positioned so that the pursuit is carried out from a broad front.

c. In view of the above, in order to intercept and destroy the enemy, pursuit must be carried out over a wide and deep area.

d. Making pursuit constriction effective

(Pursuit constriction is the angle of intersection of the line of direction of the unit pushing in from the flank [unit given the mission of effecting a turning movement], with the axis of withdrawal of the enemy)

(1) In many cases in military history, one major cause of letting the enemy escape is being dazzled by the immediate battle situation (enemy's retreat situation) and shortsightedly sharply changing the direction of pursuit by the unit pushing in from the flank, [so the direction is] toward the enemy's flank and rear, in order quickly to interdict the route of withdrawal.

[In Fig. 96] pursuit toward A is wrong (the enemy is allowed to escape, because when we have reached point A, the enemy will be withdrawing to line C).

Pursuit must be toward B.

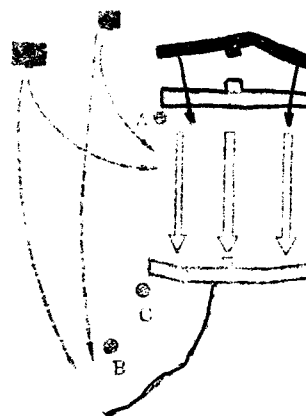


Fig. 96

(2) Considerations concerning the remoteness of the pursuit constriction

In cases where, as in the Battle of Tannenberg, the enemy himself also has great confidence in victory, attempts an advance toward us to attack, decides to withdraw from a disadvantageous encircled posture by a sudden change in strategic posture from a rather deep engagement situation, and his withdrawal is greatly limited because of us, pursuit that interdicts the enemy's withdrawal route at a relatively close location (pursuit with nearby constriction) is best.

In contrast, in general, even if an enemy on the defensive is still only slightly engaged in combat, in case our created advantageous strategic posture is seen and an attempt at timely withdrawal is made in order to escape from us, it must be borne in mind that attempting nearby interdiction of the enemy's withdrawal route (pursuit with nearby constriction), in many cases, becomes the reason for the enemy's escape.

(3) Items which require care in carrying out an effective constriction in a pursuit, are as follows:

- (a) Correctly estimating the enemy's withdrawal direction.
- (b) Accurately estimating the time that the enemy begins the withdrawal.
- (c) Considering the relationship with our offensive's termination point.

e. Since enemy units to be intercepted in a pursuit disappear, appropriate countermeasures against this are necessary.

Historical examples:

(1) Examples of successful pursuit

Napoleon's distant pushing in from a flank in a pursuit following the Battle of Jena [1806]

The Malay Campaign

(2) Examples of unsuccessful pursuit

The Japanese Army's Battle of Liao-yang [1904] in the Russo-Japanese War

The German Army's pursuit toward Dunkirk in World War II

(3) Example of the enemy disappearing during the pursuit

Disappearance of the North Korean Army in the Korean War

Section 2. Retrograde movement

1. Meaning of retrograde movement

Retrograde movement is stopping the current engagement and withdrawing toward the rear in order to conform to a new operations plan.

Attack, defense, pursuit, and the delaying action are combat engagements, whereas the basic nature of the retrograde movement lies in its being an evolution.

The delaying action and retrograde movement both aim at giving terrain to the enemy and gaining time, but differ in whether combat power is used.

2. Primary objective of the retrograde movement

The primary objective of the retrograde movement is to separate quickly from the enemy.

Hence, except when absolutely unavoidable, it is necessary to correct posture quickly without engaging in combat with the enemy, and withdraw toward an objective.

3. Determination of the retrograde movement's objective

If it has been decided to execute a retrograde movement, it is necessary, based upon the subsequent operations plan, to select an objective of the retrograde movement in a location sufficiently distant to gain a time margin at least to correct posture.

The main factors influencing selection of the retrograde movement's objective are as follows:

- a. The forward-movement capability of the logistic support of the pursuing

force [i.e., capability of logistic support to keep up with movements of combat elements]

- b. Degree to which the transportation lines used by the pursuing force can be destroyed.
- c. Degree of delay of the pursuit that is progressively increased by the organized resistance of the rear guard.
- d. Degree of preparation for the retrograde movement (if preparations are complete, even if an objective is selected that is relatively close, the goal of "separation from the enemy" can be achieved).

4. Disengagement and retirement

In order to effect a retrograde movement, it is necessary first to break contact with the enemy (disengagement) and then to gain space from the enemy (retirement).

Also, with disengagement and retirement, there are cases that are carried out voluntarily and cases carried out because forced by the enemy.

a. Disengagement

(1) Main factors affecting the difficulty of a disengagement are as follows:

- (a) Situation of both sides. In particular:

Degree of pressure from the enemy

Existence of our reserves and fresh troops

Relationship between the front line and the line of communications (angle of enemy interdiction of our line of withdrawal)

- (b) Terrain
- (c) Time of disengagement (especially whether daytime or nighttime)
- (d) Weather

(2) Method of disengagement in cases where our line of withdrawal may be cut in an acute angle [Fig. 97]

- (3) Measures to facilitate disengagement

- (a) Repulsing the enemy or dealing a major blow to the enemy
- (b) Local counterattack

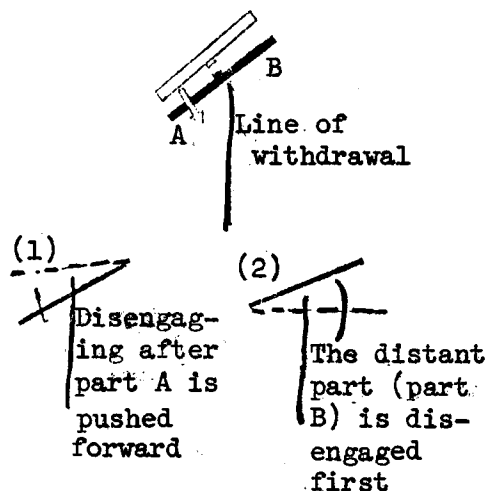


Fig. 97

The enemy's attack plan is frustrated, he is placed temporarily on the defensive, and meanwhile, taking advantage of this interval, we accomplish disengagement. However, there are many cases where it is difficult to place the entire enemy force on the defensive with a local counterattack. A counter-attack when a retrograde movement is intended, is the ultimate measure in cases of an unavoidable situation.

(c) Use of nighttime

Daytime disengagement, except in cases of unavoidable situations, must be avoided as much as possible.

(d) Use of terrain

Since, because of the terrain, one element of the force is easy for the enemy to press and [another] element is difficult to press, units in the element that is difficult to press because of the terrain, cover the disengagement of units in the other element.

(e) An element which, because of local pressure, would cause another element to become difficult to disengage, is directed to resist desperately.

(f) Use of weather

It involves a large element of chance, but there are examples of its successful use.

(4) Sequence of disengagement of front-line units

Disengagement is from places where enemy pressure is slight. However, depending upon terrain and the relationship to the line of withdrawal, there are cases where units under heavy enemy pressure are disengaged first.

For example, the following cases are of this type:

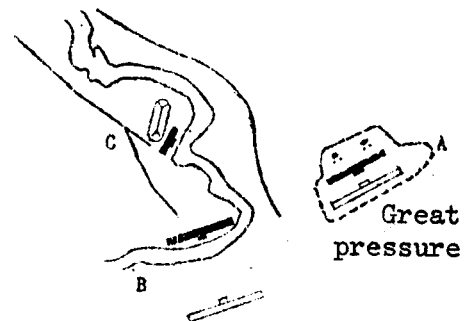


Fig. 98

Even though there is a breakthrough at A, the enemy cannot advance rapidly while there exists a covering position at C.

However, when there is a disengagement at B, there is danger that the enemy will exert direct pressure on the line of withdrawal, disengagement at A will become increasingly difficult, and C may even become unusable.

Hence, in this case, disengagement is from A.

b. Retirement

(1) Increase in relative evolution capability

It is necessary to increase our evolution capability, reduce the enemy's evolution capability, and attempt to increase [our] relative evolution capability.

(a) Use of the maximum total tactical mobility (transport capability)

(b) Obstruction of enemy pursuit

1 Use of terrain, especially of obstructions

2 Delaying, by air assault, the advance of the enemy

(2) Direction of retrograde movement

The direction of retrograde movement generally is selected on the basis of our line of communications; but, depending upon the situation, a different direction may be selected. Below are a number of considerations concerning the direction of retrograde movement.

(a) At the time of deciding upon a retrograde movement, in a situation where the enemy is advancing his posture of pushing in and enveloping from the flank, it being impossible to withdraw in one's desired direction, initially, as a precondition to escaping the enemy's envelopment, the retrograde movement temporarily is in a direction far from the line of communications. (Retrograde movement that describes an arc)

In this case, it is necessary to secure the vicinity of the axis of maneuver and to surpass the enemy in tactical mobility.

(b) Depending upon the situation and terrain, there are cases where it is not possible to withdraw in the direction of one's own base of operations, and the line of withdrawal must be changed.

In this case, the key to success is whether it is possible to ensure supply.

(c) Centrifugal retrograde movement [=retrograde movement dispersing on radial lines that permit return to the original central point]

The centrifugal retrograde movement is carried out in the following cases:

Retrograde movement after a breakthrough in the center by the enemy

On the basis of a position relative to the terrain, particularly to the battlefield and to cover

A retrograde movement with the purpose of decoying the enemy

This type of retrograde movement is good in that it causes the enemy to divide his force or operate on interior lines and we operate on exterior lines and make strategic surprise attacks, but it has the disadvantages that concealment of plans is difficult and our force is caused to be divided.

Historical example: Retrograde movement of the German Army from the vicinity of Warsaw in World War I.

(d) Centripetal retrograde movement

It is advantageous for establishing control over the force and reassuming the offensive, but inter-unit coordination may be bad, and there is the danger of being intercepted when the pursuing force is superior.

Historical example: Retrograde movement of the Allied forces from the frontier to the Marne line in World War I.

5. Measures against pursuit by the enemy pushing in from the flank

In the usual sequence of withdrawal (first the rear echelons, then the combat echelon), there is the danger of interception, or of interdiction of our route of withdrawal, by the enemy. Hence, it is necessary to send out a highly mobile unit in front of the withdrawal route as advance guard or flank guard, or to occupy key tactical positions on the flank and in the rear, or to assume a disposition of mobile protection to the flank and rear, and then shift to withdrawal of rear elements followed by the combat echelon.

Depending upon the situation, counterattacks are made in necessary areas.

6. Items that require particular attention in a retrograde movement

In a retrograde movement, items that require attention are utilization of terrain and weather, use of evolution capability, effective control and direction, all-around security, use of obstructions, air support, etc., but from the characteristics of the retrograde maneuver, particularly important items are the following:

Secrecy and deception concerning plans

Arousal of fighting spirit

At that time, an effort must be made particularly not to slip into a rout psychology.

Historical examples:

Operation of Sakurai's corps extricating itself from Burma

Retrograde movement of the [Japanese] 33d Division in Burma